

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for processing calls to a directory, comprising:
receiving a call to a directory, the call including one of a request to add data to the directory, a request to modify data in the directory, or a request to delete data from the directory, the call further including at least one attribute;
evaluating the call attribute according to one or more rules a first rule governing content of data that may be included in the directory and a second rule governing structure of data that may be included in the directory;
~~processing the call based upon the evaluation of the call according to the one or more previously determined rules~~
determining if the attribute complies with one of the first rule and the second rule;
forwarding the call to the directory when the call attribute complies with one of the first rule and the second rule; and
forwarding an error message to a source of the call when the call attribute does not comply with one of the first rule and the second rule.
2. (Cancelled).
3. (Cancelled).
4. (Currently amended) The method for processing calls recited in claim 21, wherein the call is forwarded to the directory through a directory access server controlling access to the directory.
- 5-11. (Cancelled).

12. (Currently amended) The method for processing calls recited in claim 21, further comprising wherein the evaluation step further includes:

determining if one or more attributes included in the call attribute complies ~~comply~~ with one or more rules in a first set of rules a data addition rule when the call includes a request to add data to the directory,

determining if one or more attributes included in the call attribute complies ~~comply~~ with one or more rules in a second set of rules a data modification rule when the call includes a request to modify data in the directory, and

determining if one or more attributes included in the call attribute complies ~~comply~~ with one or more rules in a third set of rules a data deletion rule when the call includes a request to delete data from the directory.

13. (Original) The method for processing calls recited in claim 1, wherein the directory employs the lightweight directory access protocol.

14. (Currently amended) A rule attribute enforcer, comprising:

a rule validator and a transaction monitor; for determining if attributes in a call to a directory comply with rules governing data that may be included in the directory; and

a the transaction monitor for intercepting calls being capable of intercepting a call to the a directory, such that the transaction monitor diverts diverting the intercepted calls call to the rule validator that include if the call includes one of a request to add data to the directory, a request to modify data in the directory, or and a request to delete data from the directory; and forwards forwarding the intercepted calls call to the directory that do if the call does not include a request to add data to the directory, a request to modify data in the directory, or a request to delete data from the directory; and

the rule validator being capable of determining if an attribute of the call complies with one of a first rule governing content of data that may be included in the directory and a second rule governing structure of data that may be included in the directory, forwarding the call when the attribute complies with one of the first rule and the second rule, and returning an error

message to a source of the call when the attribute does not comply with one of the first rule and the second rule.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim ~~15~~14, wherein the rule validator ~~forwards~~ is capable of forwarding the call to the transaction monitor, and the transaction monitor ~~relays~~ is capable of relaying the call to the directory.

17. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 16, wherein the transaction monitor ~~relays~~ is capable of relaying the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

18. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim ~~15~~14, wherein the rule validator ~~forwards~~ is capable of forwarding the call to the directory.

19. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim ~~15~~14, wherein the rule validator ~~forwards~~ is capable of forwarding the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim ~~20~~14, wherein the rule validator ~~forwards~~ is capable of forwarding the call to the transaction monitor, and the transaction monitor ~~relays~~ is capable of forwarding the call to the directory.

22. (Currently amended) The attribute rule enforcer recited in claim 21, wherein the transaction monitor ~~relays~~ is capable of relaying the call to the directory through a directory access server that controls access to the directory.

23. (Cancelled).

24. (Cancelled).

25. (Original) A directory network, including:

one or more client computers;

a directory, and

an attribute rule enforcer as recited in claim 14, the attribute rule enforcer being arranged in the directory network so as to intercept calls from the one or more client computers to the directory.

26. (Currently amended) The directory network recited in claim 25, further including a directory access server ~~that controls~~ capable of controlling access to the directory interposed between the attribute rule enforcer and the directory.